

**ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE**

**PATIENT CONTROLLED ATRIAL SHOCK THERAPY**

An implanted cardiac device detects an atrial arrhythmia and provides periodically updated atrial arrhythmia status as long as the arrhythmia is ongoing. A patient may request an indication of ongoing atrial arrhythmia status from external to the patient using a patient activator. The patient activator may include a magnet for closing a reed switch in the implanted device to provide the request or may provide the request over a telemetry link to the implanted device. The implanted device may provide the requested atrial arrhythmia status and other information in the form of an audible tone produced by the implanted device or as a message telemetered from the implanted device to the patient activator. The patient activator may include a tone detector and display for providing a visual indication of the atrial arrhythmia status indication. The magnet activator may also be employed to request or withhold atrial shock therapy.